

Chicopee Register

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Stepping up for students

CPS offers bagged meals to city youth

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

Chicopee students who are accustomed to February and April vacations are now experiencing the phenomenon in March on account of COVID-19.

Unfortunately, for many, being absent from school results in the absence of a meal; a significant portion of students rely on the district to provide such meals as breakfast and lunch.

A three-week, state-mandated closure of schools began Tuesday, March 17, but there's no break in sight for members of the Chicopee School Food Service Department. Thanks to the daily effort of nearly 80 city employees, the district will continue to feed students during the closure.

"We decided on a grab-and-go style of service; almost like a drive-thru or curbside pick-up," said Melanie Wilk, director of food services for Chicopee Public Schools.

Every week day, from 8 a.m. until 1 p.m., students can pick up a meal at any one of 13



Members of the Chicopee Public Schools deliver lunches to community members amid school closures as a result of the new coronavirus outbreak. Bagged breakfasts and lunches will be available for pick-up by students at one of 13 schools city-wide between the hours of 8 a.m. and 1 p.m.

of the city's 15 schools. Wilk emphasized that the initiative prioritizes safety.

"Basically, all of the kitch-

ens are set up outside," she said. "There are tables set up outside with bagged lunches and breakfasts ready to go; ev-

erything's already in the bag, and they don't need to grab

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COMMUNITY

Mayor Vieau declares state of emergency

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

With the arrival of a new coronavirus seemingly imminent, Chicopee has declared a State of Emergency. The city is bracing itself for the potential arrival of the pandemic, one that is disrupting and threatening the lives of people across the globe.

"The coronavirus and its

impact on the Chicopee community is extremely unique and very difficult to measure," said Mayor John Vieau on March 16. "This is uncharted territory for many of us and we are proceeding with caution, collaborating with other Massachusetts mayors, trusted sources of information like the Mass. Department of Public Health and the CDC."

The highly-contagious respiratory disease is currently in its mitigation phase, Vieau noted. While some of the world's

brightest minds fight against time to discover a vaccine, the country has implemented social distancing to prevent the virus from spreading.

In the span of just 78 days, COVID-19 has redefined the meaning of "normalcy." China first reported the new strain of the coronavirus on Dec. 31. Today it exists on every continent except Antarctica.

In the United States, as of March 16, 49 states and the District of Columbia have reported confirmed presumptive or positive cases of COVID-19. Massachusetts is being heavily affected.

Schools across the state are closed, gatherings of more than 25 people are prohibited, gyms and movie theaters are shuttered and dining out is forbidden; all are temporary, preventative measures.

The visible affects of the outbreak may not yet be visi-

ble in Chicopee, but residents are highly-encouraged to stay indoors and only leave their properties for essential trips.

"Our residents must take this very seriously. Social distancing and self-quarantining are in place to stop the spread or outbreak of the virus and its impact on our elderly population and those with underlying conditions," said Vieau; the virus poses tremendous risk to individuals of the aforementioned demographics.

All public access to City Hall and all municipal buildings will be closed until April 6; needs will be re-evaluated as is deemed necessary. Only city employees are currently able to access municipal buildings to continue day-day-operations such as trash and recycling collections, said Vieau.

"If everyone complies with the Governor's recommendations we can slow or halter

the rate of impact on our local medical facilities that provide the care and services to those in need," he continued.

Vieau complimented the cohesiveness that has been exhibited by the city's departments during the ongoing time of uncertainty. He also reminded everyone to take a deep breath; being overly anxious can have detrimental affects.

"I want to ensure residents that we are doing everything we can to get us through the crisis. Fear and anxiety over an unknown disease can be overwhelming and we as a city or trying to mitigate this situation with as much normalcy," said Vieau. "We want our residents to know we care. We care about our community and we are taking all precautions to keep our community informed and up-to-date. Those are the key ways to keep our anxieties at bay – with facts and not rumors."



COMMUNITY

Folks gather for Irish Night

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Community trumps anxiety at Irish Night fundraiser

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

A powerful sense of community trumped anxiety Saturday, March 14 as dozens of community supporters attended the Irish Night at the Knights of Columbus Elder Council 69 on Granby Road. Less than 24 hours before Gov. Charlie Baker prohibited gatherings of more than 25 people, the much-anticipated festivity went on as scheduled.

The South Hadley Lions Club hosted the event, which included a social hour, dinner and raffle. Members and friends of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade Committee, and its South Hadley contingent, flocked to the venue to celebrate a tradition several decades in the making.

"We pick a marshal from South Hadley, which we've done this year. We've chosen a very deserving woman, Katherine Gallivan. We're a very small committee; we talk about it, see who's who, go from there and have had a great response," said Committee President Jacqueline Reardon.

Gallivan has lived in South Hadley for more than six decades. She currently serves as the senior clerk at the South Hadley Council on Aging and was grateful to be named as Parade Marshal.

"I feel very honored;

when I look back and see the others who have been in the same position, I feel very humbled to say the least," she said.

The primary raffle prize featured an all-expenses-paid trip to Ireland, which excited Steven Laplante, a director of the South Hadley and Granby Chamber of Commerce. Considering the concept of social distancing that has been popularized by the new coronavirus, Laplante capitalized on a valuable and timely chance for community interaction.

"There are certain events that I look forward to, and this is one of them. I've been going here every year for a long time now," said Laplante. "I try to be involved in a lot of local events and charities and love giving back to the community. This is a lot of fun with a lot of people in town that we know."

Bill Schenker helped establish the Irish Night festivity in 1985. He offered his perspective on how the event maintained its popularity through years.

"I think once everybody realized what the money was going to, it had a great appeal. It's a really good time; a lot of comradery. Plus, the trip to Ireland is a great incentive to come too," said Schenker.

The event was held despite fears surrounding the new coronavirus,



STAFF PHOTOS BY DALTON ZBIERSKI

Folks gather at the Knights of Columbus Elder Council 69 March 14 for the "Irish Night" hosted by the South Hadley Lions Club.



Guests gathered for the Irish Night browse the various raffle prizes.



Kathy Gallivan (back left) was named Parade Marshal for the South Hadley contingent of the Holyoke St. Patrick's Parade Committee. The parade was canceled March 10 as a result of the new coronavirus pandemic.

COVID-19, and attendees recognized the reality of the unprecedented situation. Gallivan was confident that "everyone brought their hand sanitizers, and Laplante noted that "there's definitely nothing that would keep me from being here."

Reardon felt fortunate that the event occurred; at the time of the event, Baker prohibited events that had more than 250 people and the function fell well below that quota.

"I consider us lucky; our money was already paid," said Reardon. "We



Jacqueline Reardon (left) checks attendees in during the beginning of Irish Night festivities at the Knights of Columbus Elder Council 69 March 14.

had already paid for the trip and the food. I think people need to take care of themselves and I certainly do understand where people are coming from because there are seniors and infants and people who are compromised who really shouldn't be around everyone."

"I think everybody is privileged to be able to celebrate no matter what their heritage is. It's family and faith and everything that goes with it," she said.

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Amid closures, city staff still working in offices

By Dalton Zbierski
Staff Writer

Throughout the week, the city's busiest buildings have sat silently and mostly unoccupied after fears surrounding COVID-19 forced their temporary closures. For the handful of municipal employees still working, the atmosphere has been unfamiliar and bizarre.

"It's actually really kind of sad. I know for a lot of older adults; this is like their second home. A lot of them come from eight in the morning until four in the afternoon. Them not being here; it's really an uneasy feeling," said Council on Aging Executive Director Sherry Manyak, referring to the current state of the RiverMills Center on W. Main St.

Each of the city's 15 schools have been closed to the public as a preventive measure against the spread of the coronavirus that is crippling the nation. Superintendent Lynn Clark highlighted the difficulties that she's experienced this week.

"This situation is unlike anything that anyone could possibly plan or train for," said Clark. "Educators find it very difficult to have an unnatural break in their connections with students and families. They develop relationships with families and students that extend beyond academics; this is very unprecedented."

The Chicopee Health Department has been on a high alert for several weeks. Health Director Lisa Sanders offered insight into what makes the virus a unique and unfamiliar threat.

"It is unprecedented, only because there's no vaccine for it. When H1N1 hit, people were concerned, but we had a vaccine and we vaccinated," she said.

Manyak expressed her concerns regarding the city's elderly population, which is highly susceptible to the virus. She asks seniors to limit their interactions and find alternative means of communication with friends and loved ones.

"Call your families and friends. Try to talk to people over the phone. I think

that's the best way to stay in contact with people. We're here; they can definitely call us. As long as we're still here, we're here. We've been fielding phone calls all day," said Manyak on March 16.

Similar to the school district's current food distribution program (see story on page 1), all seniors who typically receive meals at the senior center can now receive Meals on Wheels through Mass Elder Care. Seniors are being contacted and alerted about the option, Manyak said.

Clark said the Superintendent's Office is working closely with the state, monitoring the situation as it evolves. Difficult times such as these rightfully push nerves, but she urges parents to maintain their composure around children.

"Especially knowing that children will take their lead. During a time of high anxiety and uncertainty, it is extremely important to keep some conversations away from children. Keep the conversations positive, focus on each other. Keep things as light as possible," said Clark.

Sanders' department has been in consistent contact with the Center for Disease Control and the state's Department of Health. She encourages residents to leave the house only when necessary; when doing so, she advises them to be expedient but calm.

"You have to have a healthy dose of concern but you still want to be able to go out and get your groceries or whatever you have to do. Just understand that you have to wash your hands; that's what we've been emphasizing," said Sanders.

More information from the municipality can be found online at chicopeema.gov. Manyak has been proud of her staff for the professionalism its displayed; times are strange, but the mission remains.

"We all really care about our older adults and work really hard to make sure they're OK," said Manyak. "I have never seen or heard of anything like this before. I feel like we're living in a movie. It doesn't even seem real, but we're all pulling together as a team."

Legislators lead effort to waive cost sharing with coronavirus testing

BOSTON — In a letter circulated among colleagues, Sen. Eric P. Lesser (D-Longmeadow), Sen. Joanne M. Comerford (D-Northampton), 60 other legislators called on Gov. Charlie Baker to immediately follow in the footsteps of New York Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo in requiring Massachusetts health insurers to waive cost sharing with testing for the new coronavirus disease, COVID-19, including emergency room, urgent care and office visits.

"With more than 250 residents already in quarantine, Massachusetts must take every precaution necessary to slow the spread of coronavirus," said Lesser. "We are in the midst of a public health emergency, and our Commonwealth cannot allow insurance bills or costly deductibles to get in the way of essential testing necessary to stop the spread of this virus. Massachusetts must follow the lead of other states and waive insurance fees for coronavirus testing."

"As the Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Public Health, I have an obligation to do everything I can from

a legislative perspective to protect the health of our people," said Comerford. "The situation with COVID-19 is fluid and the Commonwealth's responses are connected, in part, to the federal government's guidance and resources. However there are some steps the Commonwealth can take right now to make screening and treatment easier for our constituents, and I am pleased to join with my colleagues in calling on the Governor to take an important step in this direction by waiving these cost sharing requirements."

The letter also calls for Baker to outline a series of actions that Massachusetts health insurers are advised to take that will directly address the potential impacts of COVID-19, including keeping Massachusetts residents informed regarding available benefits and responding to consumer inquiries; offering, where possible, telehealth medical advice and treatment; mitigating the harmful impacts of surprise billing; and preparing insurers to cover the costs if a COVID-19 immunization should become available.

MEALS from page 1

utensils or their napkins or anything. Everybody that pulls up, however many children are present, they can get a breakfast and a lunch for all of those children."

Students need not bring identification to prove that they attend a school in the district; children and teens will not be turned away. Each school will have enough meals to meet the needs of 20 percent of its population each day.

Meals will be made in the kitchens of Chicopee Comprehensive and Chicopee High schools; 15 employees in each building will contribute. Once the meals reach their location, three to six staff members will distribute them to students.

Szetela Early Childhood School and Chicopee Academy are the only schools in the district that will not serve meals during the closure. Students are prohibited from eating their meals on school property; the process is designed to operate expeditiously.

Several district employees have been permitted not to partake in the program. Wilk was initially hesitant to send her team out into the public; she's since been inspired by their attitude and performance.

"I was nervous about that but then realized I shouldn't be because my staff is

really passionate about feeding kids," said Wilk. "That's their job and they didn't even skip a beat. They really didn't; no one said, 'Oh, we're getting a three-week vacation.' They were right onboard when I mentioned that we were probably going to be feeding during this closure, however how long it ends up lasting."

Superintendent of Schools Lynn Clark commended the action currently being taken by the entire Food Services staff. In a difficult time, the group is navigating ahead in uncharted waters at full speed.

"Melanie Wilk and the Food Service staff are unbelievable. They truly care about the students that they serve. They consistently, for years prior to this, go above and beyond in many ways," said Clark.

Signage will be placed in the vicinity of each location, allowing individuals to locate the meals. Wilk credited Maintenance Director Scott Chaplain and his staff for being "incredibly communicative and supportive."

Wilk visited seven different schools on Monday, the first day of the operation. The atmosphere at each school left a lasting impression.

"Nobody's ever been through this before so there was just a weird feeling in the air for sure," she said.

Big Y announces new appointments

SPRINGFIELD — Big Y Foods Inc. recently announced several new appointments within the supermarket chain.

Among them, Emily Herrera DeLa-Cruz, of Chicopee, has been named workers compensation claims manager at the chain's Support Center.

"At Big Y, we are committed to providing the tools and training necessary to support our employees in their devel-

opment," Michael Galat, vice president of employee services, said. "We look forward to their continued growth in the pursuit of excellence as they personally develop their own skills in order to take on these new levels of responsibility."

Big Y operates 83 locations throughout Massachusetts and Connecticut, including Boston Road in Wilbraham.

St. John the Baptist School now accepting fall kindergarten registration

LUDLOW — St. John the Baptist School is now accepting applications for students wishing to enroll in the fall of 2020 in Grades K to 8. Children must be 5-years-old by Sept. 1 to register for kindergarten.

Those interested in a principal's tour of the school or would like more information should call 583-8550 or visit the St. John the Baptist School website www.sjbludlow.org and click on "Admissions/Scholarships".

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VOTERS GUIDE

Voters Guide: State Senate

Residents of precincts 7A, 7B, 8A and 8B of Chicopee are scheduled to go to the polls Tuesday, March 31, to select a new state senator to serve the remaining nine months of former state Sen. Donald Humason Jr.'s term.

Humason, a Republican from Westfield, resigned in January after being elected mayor of that city. He had represented the 11 communities of the district since 2013.

Two candidates were nominated at the March 3 primary election, state Rep. John Velis, a Democrat from Westfield, and business owner John Cain, a Republican from Southwick. As a service to voters, the Chicopee Register invited both candidates to respond to the same five questions. Their responses, in their own words up to a limit of 150, are printed on this page.

The winner of this spring's election will be eligible to take office immediately, and will serve until the end of the year. The position will be up for election again, for a full two-year term, at the state election this November.

As of this week, the election was still slated to be held on schedule, despite the cancellation of many government meetings and services in an effort to stem the spread of the coronavirus. Pick up next week's edition of the Chicopee Register for the latest information on the election.

John Cain

R-Southwick



John Cain, 31, is the owner of Cain's Mechanical Inc. of Agawam. He lives in Southwick with his wife Mikenzie Cain and daughter Colleen Cain. He is a volunteer firefighter with the Southwick Fire Department and received an honorable discharge as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy in September 2019.

1. What legislation would you advocate in your first year that will add jobs or improve the economy in our section of Western Massachusetts?

I will advocate for legislation that is currently being worked on (H. 4529) that will expand access to skilled trade education for both high school students and adults. This legislation looks to utilize technical high school infrastructure to educate students during normal school hours and outside of school hours, adults and other students. This is a fiscally conservative way of expanding education access to a large group while keeping capital and operating costs low. There is a major skills gap in the U.S. which limits business and personal growth opportunities. In Western Massachusetts there are many unfilled skilled trade positions, ranging from highway construction to aerospace manufacturing.

In addition, the Health Care Choice Bill currently being drafted by the Senate will improve transparency in health care, in turn reducing costs. In summary, it allows consumers more choices and current information regarding their healthcare and benefits.

2. What role do state and local governments have to play in immigration policy or enforcement? Would you push for a change in state law on this topic, and if so, what would you change?

ship tax credits to help make the apprentice-business relationship a win-win for everyone.

2. What role do state and local governments have to play in immigration policy or enforcement? Would you push for a change in state law on this topic, and if so, what would you change?

The first thing I learned in my immigration law class in law school is that immigration is a federal issue; state and local government have very little input. There are plenty of examples of the Supreme Court overruling states laws relating to immigration. However, the issue has been left at our doorstep due to the partisan bickering at the federal level that leads to nothing getting done.

As the current vice chair of the Veterans and Federal Affairs Committee, I would push for the passage of the bill that demands the U.S. lawmakers do the job they were elected to do.

My papau ("grandfather" in Greek) came over from Greece through Ellis Island. He had 5 cents in his pocket, played by the rules, and opened restaurants that created jobs for natural-born citizens and immigrants alike. The opportunities he had, and are able to create, are what makes America great.

Federal legislation dictates the laws regarding immigration policy, therefore state and local governments should have no role in the policy. In regards to enforcement, state and local governments have an obligation to enforce the laws that have been put in place to keep their citizens safe. I support the citizens of our country and the rights and privileges which they deserve. When immigration policy is not followed, our local communities are put in danger and our law enforcement cannot properly protect and serve the people. As state senator, I will advocate for legislation that protects our communities, law enforcement and first responders. I will work against sanctuary policies, including issuing driver's licenses to illegal immigrants. Rather than harboring lawlessness, I will advocate for those who want to become citizens and live by the values, morals, ethics and laws that make this country safe and prosperous.

3. What would you do differently than the former senator, Donald Humason? What votes did he take during his tenure that you would have opposed?

Overall, Sen. Humason presented and sponsored legislation that I agree with. His voting record shows his conservative values, but also his ability to work with other lawmakers for the benefit of the taxpayer. I will continue to strongly advocate for legislation for veterans and in particular, continue to be a strong advocate for the Holyoke Soldiers Home. I have researched his legislation and could not find any that I disagree with. The main difference is I will make representation of all 11 communities more universal, and not consider Westfield the focal point of the district. I will proudly continue the transparency and accessibility that Sen. Humason provided to his constituents. Sen. Humason was well-respected and well-liked by his constituents. I am confident that I can build off his legacy and continue to represent this district proudly and faithfully.

4. Are state taxes at an appropriate level? Would you make any changes — or oppose any proposed changes — to the income, sales and gasoline tax rates?

Government has a spending problem that tax increases won't solve. The level of taxes are inflated. With a \$2 billion rainy-day fund, our government is spending recklessly while introducing more taxes. Any personal or business budget spending must be controlled. Many taxes are not used for their intended purpose, but moved to the general fund and used for entitlement programs. My focus is transparency: showing the people what politicians are doing with our hard-earned money. Reducing costs of government projects would allow more projects to be completed, create jobs, and stimulate small business growth. I oppose the proposed gas tax, TCI, or other tax increases that subsidize Boston and the MBTA. Without reducing costs and spending, taxpayers and businesses will continue leaving the state, crippling local economies. Priority should be retaining taxpayers by providing value rather than using them as a pocketbook for financially failing government agencies.

5. What specific belief, attribute or experience makes you a better choice for senator than your opponent in this race?

I am the best choice to be the next state senator based on my professional, personal and public service experience, formal education and military leadership training. I understand firsthand the issues that families and businesses face daily. I have experience in balancing budgets and solving problems timely while working with people of different viewpoints. I know what it is like to have to make payroll on a Thursday night without passing a supplemental budget. Career politicians like my opponent, who have not worked in the private sector, have led this state down a path of exuberant spending without regard for the impact of their decisions on businesses and the working class. I have always been accountable to customers, employees or employers, and will hold myself accountable to constituents. I am committed to transparent government, where my opponent has voted against transparency legislation throughout state government, which does not allow proper representation.

legislators cannot be looking at the pockets of taxpayers as the only solution to problems, but should be better directed in proper fiscal management.

5. What specific belief, attribute or experience makes you a better choice for senator than your opponent in this race?

I have six years of experience with a record of achievement through bipartisan efforts.

As a current major in the U.S. Army Reserves — and combat veteran who served two tours in Afghanistan — my time in the military shaped my bipartisan approach. When given an order, we didn't ask about political allegiances, we just got to work, got the job done, and didn't care who got credit.

As an attorney, I spent years studying and interpreting the laws of our state. I learned many lessons that have made the transition from attorney, to lawmaker, a comfortable one.

During my time as a representative, I have established many essential and necessary relationships with leaders and lawmakers on both sides of the aisle in order to get things done for my constituents.

All these experiences have given me a strong voice on Beacon Hill, and that's what the people of Western Mass. need.

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John Velis

D-Westfield



John Velis, 41, is the elected state representative for Westfield. He lives in Westfield. In addition to his service on Beacon Hill, he is also a veteran and a major in the U.S. Army Reserves.

1. What legislation would you advocate in your first year that will add jobs or improve the economy in our section of Western Massachusetts?

We have jobs available here in Western Massachusetts through our thriving manufacturing, health care, and information technology industries. The legislation we need to advocate for must protect and expand these job industries, while also providing the requisite training programs at all levels to fill these jobs.

Westfield Tech currently does a great job of this; we must take what they've accomplished and expand it to our other communities. We should look into other programs, as well, such as apprentice-

ship tax credits to help make the apprentice-business relationship a win-win for everyone.

2. What role do state and local governments have to play in immigration policy or enforcement? Would you push for a change in state law on this topic, and if so, what would you change?

The real need starts us in the face: We need to be more prudent with our spending habits. We need to stop looking at taxes as the way to create revenue to fund projects or fix fiscal mismanagement by certain organizations. Massachusetts does not have a revenue problem; it has a spending problem.

My strong opposition in voting against the gas tax two weeks ago was because of the negative impact it could have on Western Massachusetts. Massachusetts

3. What would you do differently than the former senator, Donald Humason? What votes did he take during his tenure that you would have opposed?

I learned very early in my Army career that it's an act in futility to either praise or condemn your predecessor. I am my own person, and unique in my approach to politics. My record shows I am the most bipartisan lawmaker in Massachusetts and that approach — with respect to all lawmakers — makes me truly unique.

4. Are state taxes at an appropriate level? Would you make any changes — or oppose any proposed changes — to the income, sales and gasoline tax rates?

In my view, no, there is no need for any new taxes. The real need starts us in the face: We need to be more prudent with our spending habits. We need to stop looking at taxes as the way to create revenue to fund projects or fix fiscal mismanagement by certain organizations. Massachusetts does not have a revenue problem; it has a spending problem.

My strong opposition in voting against the gas tax two weeks ago was because of the negative impact it could have on Western Massachusetts. Massachusetts

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Cumberland Farms teams with American Cancer Society

In an effort to help fund breakthrough cancer research, Cumberland Farms and its parent company EG Group partnered with the American Cancer Society, enabling customers to make donations at the register.

Now through March 31, customers at all EG Group convenience stores, including Cumberland Farms, will have the opportunity to make donations to the American Cancer Society. Proceeds will help the Society fund cancer research and pro-

vide life-saving services including rides to chemotherapy treatments, free places to stay near treatment and a live 24/7 cancer information helpline.

"This nationwide initiative allows us to unlock funds that fuel our mission," Wayen White, executive vice president of the American Cancer Society said. "We are thrilled to partner with the esteemed EG Group on this initiative and look forward to ongoing collaborations where we can continue to fight cancer together."

Journalism scholarships available to students through NENPA

Aspiring journalists are encouraged to apply for a New England Newspaper and Press Association scholarship through the Journalism Education Foundation of New England.

High school seniors and college students studying and acquiring work experience preparing them for a career in journalism are eligible to apply.

To qualify, students must be a resident of New England, be a high school senior or college undergraduate studying journalism or a related field, and have

GPA of 3.0 or higher. Additionally, applicants must demonstrate a serious interest in journalism by sending a cover letter, transcript, resume or biography, letter of recommendation and a body of published work in a school news publication, general circulation newspaper or similar publication or a body of work prepared for a journalism class.

The deadline for applications is March 27.

For more information or applications, visit nenpa.com/students/scholarships.

Scholarship available through Ad Club

SPRINGFIELD — The Advertising Club of Western Massachusetts Scholarship Committee announces scholarship applications are now available online at adclubwm.org.

Applications will also be available through guidance department at high schools in Hampden, Hampshire and Franklin counties, or by contacting the Ad Club at 413-342-0533.

Western Massachusetts seniors who plan to attend an accredited college or technical school to study advertising communications, marketing or graphic arts and will be attending in September 2020 are encouraged to apply. The scholarship must be applied against tuition and fees at the school. Candidates will be judged on academic performance, extracurricular activities, community service and/or work experience, a

demonstrated interest in advertising, communications, marketing or graphic design, personal recommendations, and a letter of introduction outlining future plans.



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Turley Publications is seeking an energetic person to fill the position of staff writer for two of its weekly publications: the *Ware River News*, which covers Ware, Hardwick and Warren, and the *Quaboag Current*, which covers the Brookfields, Sturbridge and New Braintree. This full-time position is based in our Ware office at 80 Main St. The successful candidate will have strong community journalism skills or the enthusiasm to develop them.

The staff writer will cover municipal meetings, features and general news; essentially everything that unfolds in small towns. Assignments will be for both newspapers as well as other companywide publications.

Qualifications should include:

- Bachelor's degree or equivalent experience
- Own camera and photography experience preferred
- Enthusiasm for community journalism
- Ability to write clean copy in a fast-paced environment

Please email resume and three writing samples directly to Eileen Kennedy Managing Editor at ekennedy@turley.com.

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PEOPLE/ MILESTONE NEWS

As a free service for our readers, we will print all births, weddings, engagements, milestone anniversaries, major birthdays, military achievements, honors and awards. We have a "people news" form available for you to submit these listings. This material is provided to us by our readers and local institutions and we do not charge to print this content.

For more information, or to submit people or milestone news for The Chicopee Register, please email chicopeeregister@turley.com.

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PNA cancels annual egg hunt

BONDSVILLE — As a result of the new coronavirus and associated restrictions on public gatherings, the annual Easter Egg Hunt sponsored by the Polish National Alliance Council 62 of Chi-

opee has been canceled. The event was scheduled for April 4 at Camp Stanica in Bondsburg. For more information about the PNA, contact Terry Sherman at 596-9578 or email terrysherm@aol.com.

Valley Press Club to award journalism scholarships

SPRINGFIELD — The Valley Press Club will award up to six \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors in Western Massachusetts and northern Connecticut pursuing a career in journalism.

The Valley Press Club Scholarships, funded by contributions and dues to the Press Club, are for students planning careers in print, online or broadcast journalism.

The Republican Scholarship, funded by The Republican newspaper and administered by the club, is for students living within the newspaper's circulation area who are planning careers in print journalism.

The 22News Scholarship, funded by WWLP-22News and administered by the club, is for students planning careers in broadcast journalism.

The Edward J. Malley Jr. Memorial Scholarship, established in memory of a chief photographer for the Springfield Newspapers, is for students planning careers in photojournalism.

The Rhonda Swan Memorial Scholarship, established in memory of the award-winning journalist, editor and au-

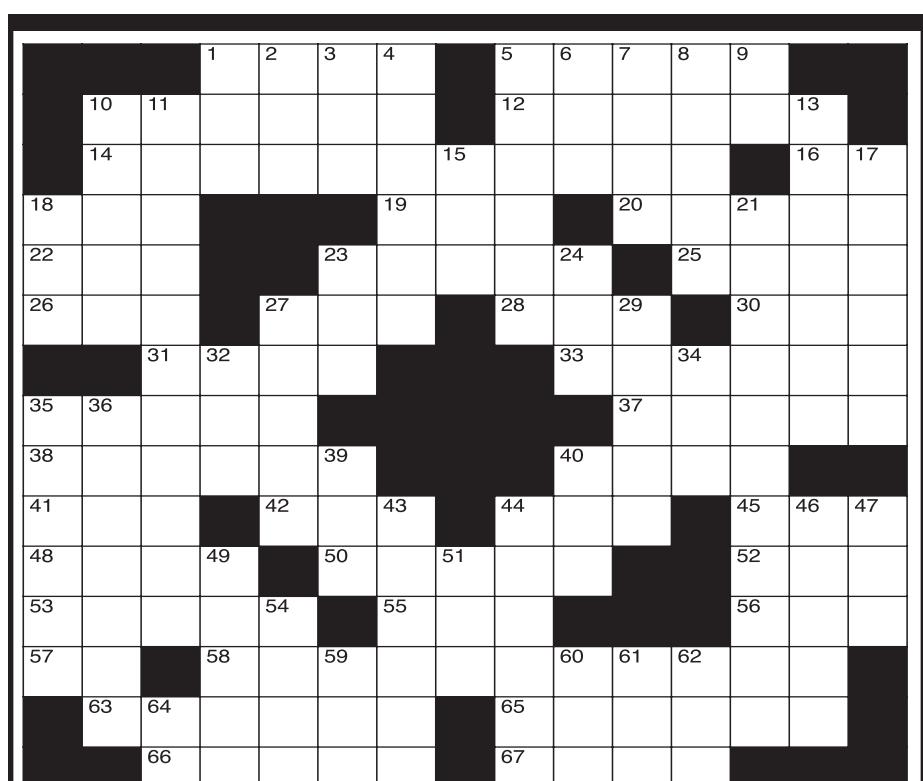
thor, is for students who are underrepresented, in the Springfield area, planning careers in journalism.

The Al Jaffe Scholarship, funded by Mr. Jaffe, the Valley Press Club's first scholarship recipient in 1964, who retired in 2015 as vice president of talent negotiation and production recruitment at ESPN, is for students planning careers in broadcast journalism or sports journalism.

Primary emphasis is placed on career goals, writing ability, scholastic aptitude and overall achievement as measured by an applicant's high school transcript, class rank, academic awards, SAT scores and extracurricular activities.

Scholarship applications are available at www.ValleyPressClub.com, high school guidance offices, or by emailing NTassinari@TheBigE.com.

Applications may be sent by mail to Noreen Tassinari, VPC Scholarship Chair, Eastern States Exposition, 1305 Memorial Ave., West Springfield, MA 01089 or electronically to NTassinari@TheBigE.com. The deadline for submissions is April 1.



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Currency of Guinea
- 5. Avert something bad
- 10. Sounds
- 12. Immediate dangers
- 14. Legendary Tar Heels coach
- 16. Californium
- 18. Work standards government dept. (abbr.)
- 19. Coastal Scottish town
- 20. Triangular lower back bones
- 22. Trouble
- 23. A way to smile
- 25. Something that is not what it seems
- 26. Of she
- 27. Temporary living quarters
- 28. Bag-like structure in a plant or animal
- 31. Spiritual leader
- 33. Soup dish
- 35. Philippine island
- 37. No longer fashionable
- 38. Peaks
- 40. Alabama football team
- 41. King Cole
- 42. Digital audiotape (abbr.)
- 44. Open trough
- 45. The woman
- 46. Cools down
- 47. Turkic language
- 48. Body part
- 49. Pulse steadily
- 50. Embedded computer hardware company
- 51. Indicates shape
- 52. Thou (plural)
- 53. Odd and remarkable
- 55. An evening party
- 56. National capital of Zambia
- 57. Tantalizes
- 67. Dark brown or black Adams
- 24. Snitch
- 27. Trimmed
- 29. Greek god of desire
- 32. Take to the limit
- 34. Cool!
- 35. Sound mental health
- 36. Native American group
- 39. Test for high schoolers
- 40. Rocky peak
- 43. Preferences
- 44. Bother
- 46. Call attention to (slang)
- 47. Snake-like fish
- 49. Bulgarian capital
- 51. Don't know when yet
- 54. Italian Seaport
- 59. Brooklyn hoopster
- 60. Where to bathe
- 61. Equal, prefix
- 62. Beverage container
- 64. Denotes openness

CROSSWORD SOLUTION ON PAGE 10

OPINION

EDITORIAL

Give up your tribe for Lent

This is the time of year when churches talk about what Jesus Christ gave up — his life — to benefit humanity. What will you give up?

For traditional Christians, Ash Wednesday was the start of Lent, a 40-day period of prayer, self-examination and self-denial leading up to commemorations of Jesus' death and resurrection.

As part of their observance, many Christians choose something to "give up" during Lent — usually something material, and often something that's unhealthy anyway, such as candy or alcohol or tobacco. Foregoing a favorite indulgence can be difficult and cutting out a vice can improve one's health, but in the wider array of personal behaviors one can give up, there are harder habits to break, and greater improvements to be found.

Rather than — or in addition to — boosting one person's wellbeing, why not make a sacrifice that will contribute to the health of our society, our democracy and our future?

Give up your tribe.

America has made remarkable progress tearing down the old distinctions that divided us. Distrust and prejudice among genders, races, economic classes, religions and geographic regions is less of a factor now than at any time in our nation's history. That's not to say these prejudices have been eliminated, nor to suggest that we shouldn't continue to fight them now or in the future. But we've made remarkable progress.

One form of prejudice and intolerance is sharply on the rise, however, and it threatens the core of our community. Even as our physical communities have become more integrated, the anonymity of the Internet and the fragmentation of media have led to an intellectual segregation — a self-sorting of Americans into virtual tribes of like-thinking individuals, choosing to associate mainly with those who hold similar political and cultural opinions, and — this is the worst part — increasingly intolerant of those who disagree.

Mainstream Democrats speak of mainstream Republicans (and vice versa) as not merely misguided, but evil. Republicans seek to destroy Democrats (and vice versa), rather than trying to convince them. The extremes of both parties look on their moderate wings not as allies but as dangerous traitors. Politics has become not a debate but a war. We try to win battles instead of understanding each other; fighting before we compromise.

This primitive tribal behavior is killing our democracy. Give it up.

This Lent — or this political season, if you prefer — give up the satisfying self-righteousness of the tribal warrior. Listen to a rival's opinion rather than just waiting for an opening for an ad-hominem attack. Try to convert an opponent instead of defeating him or her. Be open to a new perspective and acknowledge every time that we are all Americans first and that the incredible diversity nationwide results in a bewildering diversity of experience and opinion throughout the United States of America. For that matter, we are all humans — and none of us is closer to the divine, or closer to perfection, than any other.

The man who made the first Lenten sacrifice, 2,000 years ago, also wanted his followers to give up their tribes, to see the humanity in their enemies, to treat others with equal respect and charity.

Not everyone believes in his story or worships at his church but the message of kindness and empathy doesn't require a particular god or catechism. It can be found in religions, philosophies and ethical systems from cultures all around the world.

Truth and righteousness are not the sole possessions of any political party. Give up the tribes. Return to a true community — our city, our nation, our planet.

Pre-start cannas now!

I was trying to think up a good indoor gardening project that the girls could help me with over their unexpected break from school. How about pre-starting some canna rhizomes? I have a few overwintering in the mudroom and if I start the now they'll be good-sized by May. Read on.

Cannas are gorgeous plants for the summer border. Their large, paddle-shaped leaves and fist-sized clusters of vivid-toned flowers add an exotic touch to beds and container plantings. Sometimes, however, a gardener's initial experience with this tender bulb leads to disappointment rather than delight. The plant may take most of the season to reach its mature height and come into flower, only to be struck down by frost a few weeks later. Why not give your cannas a head start? By potting them up now you will get blooms earlier in the season and be able to enjoy wonderful tropical foliage for a longer period.

If you are shopping for canna rhizomes for the first time, you will no doubt find a better selection through mail order nurseries than the local garden center. Standard varieties can grow upwards of six feet tall, whereas dwarf cultivars top off at two or three feet. Choose carefully! All will do best if planted in full sun and fertile soil. Some cannas even make great water specimens. When you place your order, mention to the operator that you'd like your bulbs as soon as it is safe enough for them to be sent in the mail without risk of freezing, otherwise you will likely receive them close to Memorial Day, which is too late for indoor planting.

When your package arrives, unpack it immediately. Canna rhizomes will come in small plastic bags filled with peat moss. At the very least, they should be about the size of your thumb; sometimes they are even double that in width. They ought to be firm, not at all soft. To pot them up, choose a container that is a couple of inches bigger than the rhizome when it is laid out horizontally; one six

to eight inches in diameter is usually ideal. Fill the pot about half way with a good quality moistened potting soil. Lay the rhizome on top with leaf buds pointing up. Any hairy roots, new or old can fall to the side. Cover with two inches of soil. If your finished product reaches the rim, reposition so that you have at least an inch deep "basin" on top to make watering well easier. Place the pots in a warm location and continue to water as needed. When the first sprouts appear, move the canna plants to a sunny window or place under grow lights. By mid-May you can start to harden the plants off outdoors by gradually exposing them to bright sun, wind and fluctuating temps. After a week to 10 days of acclimatization, and if there are no frosts in the forecast, cannas can be removed from their pots and planted in their permanent summer location. A shovelful of compost in the planting hole along with supplemental fertilizer every couple of weeks will result in big, floriferous plants fast!

Be sure to save your cannas from year to year; it's easy and makes great sense money-wise. I have had the same 'Wyoming' canna going for well over a decade now. After a light frost, dig up the plants and let them dry briefly. Then, cut the foliage away from the rhizomes and store them at 50 degrees in boxes or tubs filled with peat moss. As mentioned, my mudroom is the perfect spot in my house. I am sure there is a place in yours too. After the second season you will have enough divisions to share with family and friends; much to their delight.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 28 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to ekennedy@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

IN THE GARDEN



Roberta McQuaid
Columnist

WE CARE ABOUT YOUR NEWS!

The Chicopee Register welcomes submissions of news in or related to Chicopee and its residents. Our "People News," is filled with submitted engagement announcements, wedding announcements, birth announcements, your new baby or news about your 25th or 50th anniversary celebrations. Please e-mail correspondence along with a photo to chicopeeregister@turley.com or send it to: Chicopee Register, c/o Turley Publications, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069.

Chicopee Register

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Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less in length. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require letter writers to include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We must authenticate authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous or contain unsubstantiated allegations, per-

sonal attacks, defamation of character and offensive language. All unknown or alleged facts and quotations offered by the author need to cite credible, unbiased sources.

Send letters to: The Chicopee Register, 24 Water Street, Palmer, MA 01069 or email chicopeeregister@turley.com.

The deadline for submissions is Friday at noon.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF SALE

By Ma. Gen Laws c.255, Sec. 39A, **CHUCK'S TOWING**, 78 West St., Chicopee, MA is holding a private sale for a vehicle **April 2, 2020 at 2:00 PM** to satisfy garage keepers lien for storage and towing charges and expenses of notices of sale.

1999 Honda Accord

VIN# 1HGCG3159XA027305
Owner: Jonathan Mejias
Date of Tow: 7-15-19
3/12, 3/19, 3/26/2020

SALE OF MOTOR VEHICLES UNDER G.L. c.255 Sec.39A

Notice is hereby given by **Interstate Towing, Inc.** pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 255, section 39A, that on **March 20, 2020** at Interstate Towing, Inc the following Motor Vehicles will be sold at private sale to satisfy our garage keeper's lien thereon for storage, towing charges, care and expenses of notices and sale of said vehicles.

2007 KAUFMAN 50' TRAILER

VIN: 15XFW50317L002390
Heredia Trucking
700 Franklin St
Worcester, MA 01604

2008 SUBARU OUTBACK

VIN: 4S4BP62C087356834
Willie A Bynum Brown
336L Main St
Springfield, MA 01105

2009 CHEVROLET AVEO

VIN: KL1TD56E69B639798
James Lewis & Jason Lewman
455 Newton St
South Hadley, MA 01075

2009 NISSAN MURANO

VIN: JN8AZ18W99W100816
Jessenia Santiago
28 Nathaniel St
Springfield, MA

2010 FORD FUSION SE

VIN: 3FAHP0HA3AR361791
Jessica Trotter
121 Seymour St
Pittsfield, MA 01021

2016 HONDA CIVIC LX

VIN: 2HGFC4B03GH302413
Angel Luis Sanchez Arroyo
45 Meetinghouse Rd
Chicopee, MA 01013

3/05, 3/12, 3/19/2020

MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: **Karen A Koziara** of West Springfield MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve Without Surety on the bond in an unsupervised administration.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 04/03/2020**.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court.
Date: March 05, 2020

Suzanne T. Seguin
Register of Probate
3/19/2020

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758

Docket No. HD20C0078CA

In the matter of:

Ronald Wayne White

CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME

A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by Ronald Wayne White of Chicopee, MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:

Ronald Wayne Holmes

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: **Hampden Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 04/02/2020**.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara

M Hyland, First Justice of this Court.
Date: March 04, 2020

Suzanne T. Seguin

Register of Probate

3/19/2020

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Hampden Probate and Family Court
50 State Street
Springfield, MA 01103
(413)748-7758

Docket No. HD20C0089CA

In the matter of:

Cruz Rodriguez Oquendo aka Crucita Rodriguez

CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME

A Petition to Change Name of Adult has been filed by Cruz Rodriguez Oquendo aka Crucita Rodriguez of Chicopee, MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:

Crucita Rodriguez

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: **Hampden Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 04/02/2020**.

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara

Isata M Kamara vs.

Isata M Kamara

DIVORCE SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION AND MAILING

To the Defendant:

The Plaintiff has filed

a Complaint for Divorce

requesting that the Court grant

a divorce for IRRETRIEV-

ABLE BREAKDOWN.

The Complaint is on file at the Court.

An Automatic Restraining Order has been entered in this matter preventing you from taking any action which would negatively impact the current financial status of either party. SEE Supplemental Probate Court Rule 411.

You are hereby summoned and required to serve upon:

Samuel I Kamara
15 New Ludlow Road
Chicopee, MA 01020

your answer, if any, on or before **6/16/2020**. If you fail to do so, the court will proceed to the hearing and adjudication of this action. You are also required to file a copy of your answer, if any, in the office of the Register of this Court

WITNESS, Hon. Barbara M Hyland, First Justice of this Court.

Date: March 12, 2020
Suzanne T. Seguin
Register of Probate

3/19/2020

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Sports

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SEND US YOUR SPORTS SUBMISSIONS

www.sports.turley.com**BOYS BASKETBALL**

Braves score three-peat at expense of Pacers

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

AMHERST — The members of the Chicopee boys basketball team walked out of the Curry Hicks Cage heartbroken following a loss to Taconic High School of Pittsfield in the Western Massachusetts Division 2 championship game for the second consecutive year.

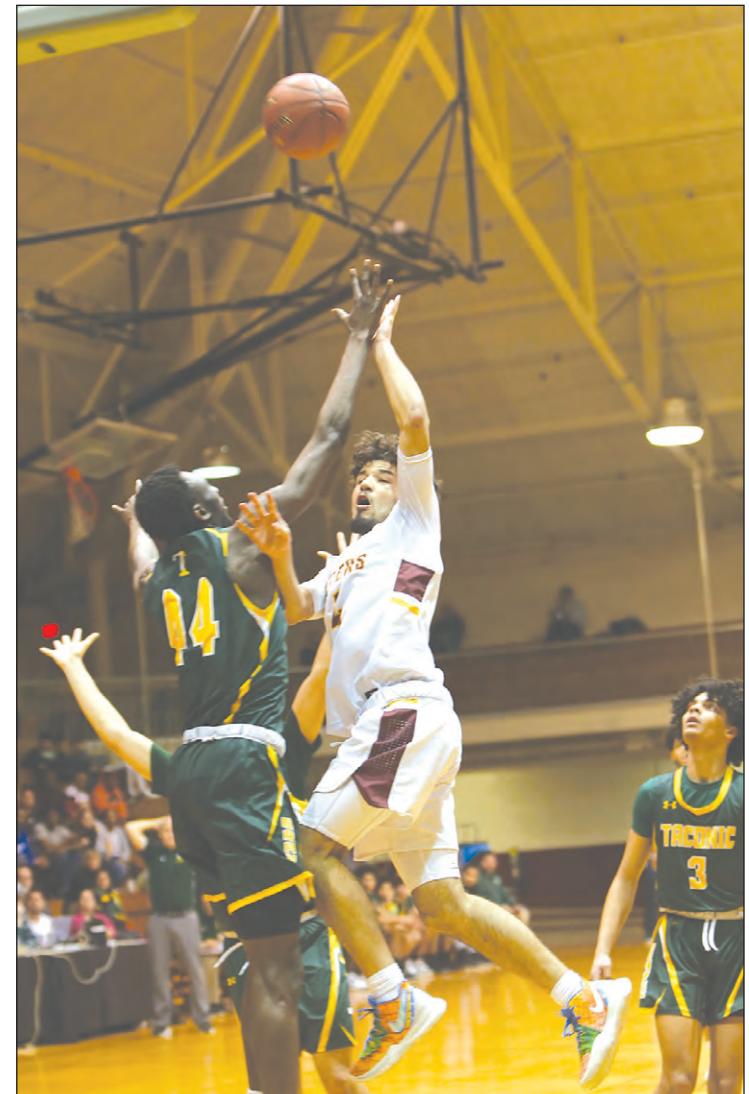
The top-seeded Pacers, who battled back from a double digit first quarter deficit, were only trailing by one point at halftime. The third-seeded Braves built a 14-point lead during the second half and they took home the championship trophy for the third year in a row with a 63-52 victory on the old parquet court located on the UMass-Amherst campus on March 7.

"This is just an amazing group of players and I really enjoyed coaching them this year," said Chicopee head coach Steve Menard. "I feel very badly that we weren't able to win tonight's game, but you just have to give Taconic a lot of credit. We knew that this was going to be a very tough game for us. We kept battling back during the second half, but we just could never get over the hump."

See **BASKETBALL** page 10

PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

D.J. Daniels makes a rush down the court.



Damian Ocasio tries to pick up a rebound.

COMMUNITY

State tournament halted before finals, Road Race cancelled

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

REGION — Last week, the sports world was changed forever when the coronavirus pandemic cancelled the MIAA state championship games, and the professional sports world went into a domino effect that has led to the stoppage of play in all games and tournaments.

As the situation developed, the MIAA had started to play the state championship semifinal games, which included Minnechaug and Monson girls basketball.

But midway through the Monson game, it was announced that all semifinal winners would be considered "co-state champions."

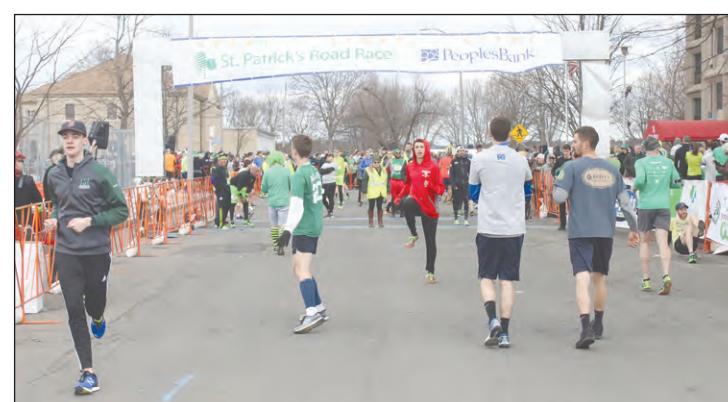
Monson's game was one of a few that was played without fans before sporting events were stopped altogether in an effort exercise a new buzzword known as "social distancing."

Locally, one of the biggest impacts to the area occurred last Tuesday afternoon when

Holyoke Mayor Alex Morse announced the cancellation of the St. Patrick's Day Parade, and with it, the popular St. Patrick's Road Race, which was set to kick off on Saturday, March 21.

The event is cancelled and will not be made up due to the immense amount of planning and work with sponsors, public safety, sanitation, and other officials needed to make the event happen.

"It's not something you can

See **EVENTS** page 10

Top racers from last year's St. Patrick's Day Road Race warm up right before race time.



The Minnechaug Regional High School girls basketball team was in action earlier this week as the MIAA State Tournament held semi-finals. The finals were called off.

SPRING SPORTS

Sports world crippled by coronavirus outbreak

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

It feels like to some, the sports world has been literally the "most" affected by the spread of the coronavirus.

Changes are happening every day related to the virus so much in fact that our weekly papers had a very tough time keeping up with them last week.

Now, the changes have started to slow down, because here in Western Massachusetts, there is not much more that can be done to bring the world to a crawl.

Even before many schools made the decision at the end of last week to close their doors for two weeks, the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association closed down the conclusion of the state tournament, shut fans out, and delayed the start of the spring sports season by at least two weeks.

But is delaying spring sports by two weeks really a new concept in Massachusetts? Absolutely not. Excessive March snow and cold temperatures

slowing the melting process has delayed baseball and softball seasons for between one and two weeks for the last few years.

Last year, the regular season was extended by a week to accommodate the poor weather for the springtime and give schools a chance to play all their regular season games.

The only disappointing part for many athletes, is that it appeared for a while we had an early spring coming with baseball and softball fields already drained, and the grass lacrosse fields just about fit for play on the actual days teams are supposed to open in late March.

But like Major League Baseball, which delayed the start of its season, the start of the spring sports season cannot go on.

The MIAA has also mandated that coaches are not able to have anything to do with their teams, much like the current rules that exist during sport off-seasons. That means, with two

See **CORONAVIRUS** page 9

Open Cup postponed, no makeup date yet announced

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW—The Western Mass. Pioneers have made a total of 11 appearances in the Lamar Hunt U.S. Open Cup, which is the oldest ongoing national soccer competition in the United States, since 1998.

The Pioneers have been invited by U.S. Soccer to participate in the 107th edition of the elite tournament after not qualifying a year ago.

But the Pioneers will have to wait a while before it has the opportunity to take part in the event after the coronavirus pandemic has led to the event being postponed.

The Pioneers were originally scheduled to play GPS Portland on Tuesday, March 24.

"We're very excited to be playing in another Open Cup match at Lusitano Stadium," said Pioneers General Manager Greg Kolodziey. "It's always a fun tournament and it's a very good opportunity for the boys to play against some very good teams."

In the past, the Open Cup has always started in May, but U.S. Soccer decided to begin this year's tournament a couple of months earlier. With the ban on large events, it looks like the Cup may have to wait until May again.

"Because of our league rules, we won't have access to any of the college



PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHTOS.COM
Daniel Fabian converges with an opponent for possession of the ball during the Pioneers last Open Cup appearance in 2018.

players until the start of the regular season in May," Kolodziey said. "We'll have to piece together a roster for our first Open Cup game. We do have some older players from last year's team that should be available to us. We'll be signing players during the next couple of weeks."

Federico Molinari will be returning as the Pioneers head coach.

The last time that the Pioneers won an Open Cup match was in 2014 when they defeated Mass. Premier Soccer, 4-1 at home in the first round. They then lost, 2-1, to the Rochester Rhinos (USL Pro) in a second-round road match. The Pioneers suffered first round losses at Lusitano Stadium in 2015, 2017, and 2018.



Louis Tambini changes directions with the ball and heads for the goal. The 2020 Open Cup will be delayed.



Kyle Tomas moves toward the goal and goes for a shot during the 2018 match.

"We haven't had very much luck playing in the Open Cup during the past couple of years," Kolodziey said. "We're hoping to turn things around this year."

The Pioneers did have a very memorable 2019 campaign. They finished the regular season with an 11-0-3 record and captured the Northeast Division title. The Western Mass. squad defeated North Carolina Fusion U-23 by the final score of 3-1 in the conference semifinals before losing to host Reading United AC 1-0 in the finals.

"We had a good group of players and it was a very good season for us last year," Kolodziey said. "We're hoping to qualify for the league playoffs again this year."

GPS Portland Phoenix also made the league playoffs last year and they lost 2-1 to Reading United in the semifinals.

The Pioneers are currently scheduled to play at GPS Portland Phoenix to kick off the 2019 regular season on May 9. They'll be playing at AC Connecticut the following week before hosting GPS Portland in the home opener on May 22. The Pioneers are scheduled to play five more regular season home matches.

There has not been any further information on the regular season schedule and it is possible the season will open without any delays since it is not set to begin until May.

CORONAVIRUS from page 8

weeks off from school and no coaching guidance, and then add in almost no facilities to use, athletes will be on their own to stay in shape and be ready to go if the MIAA allows spring practices to begin on March 30.

But that is not the only piece of the sports world that is affected. So many youth organizations and parks departments have also been forced to stop practices and seasons and tournaments due to concern for the coronavirus.

During the past week, the 36th iteration of the Szlats Memorial Tournament was just halted after only two days of competition by the tournament committee because Chicopee Public Schools had to shut down their facilities.

Other great season-ending events were shut down as well, including banquets and all-star games. The 2020 High School Senior All-Star Game held at the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame was cancelled. The game was originally set for Thursday, March 19, but Gov. Charlie Baker has barred any gathering with more than 250 people. The games drawn a few thousand throughout

the evening.

What could hurt the athletes most is the uncertainty. Spring sports are shut down for two weeks right now. But it is possible that could be extended, or worse, cancelled all together. Unfortunately, those options are on the table. The MIAA most recently released this statement on Saturday, March 14.

"The MIAA staff equally shares in these emotions and the existing heartbreak which has resulted due to canceled games, shortened seasons and disruption to exciting school activities, trips and opportunities.

As we face these uncharted waters, be confident in knowing the MIAA staff is well and is readily available to you with guidance, support, resources and kindness. Our office is open and functioning. Scheduled meetings are moving forward in person or via tele- and/or video-conferencing, as organized by each MIAA sport liaison. Communication regarding the status of the spring season will be forthcoming following necessary discussions this coming week."

Turley Sports will continue to monitor the situation and bring you news whenever we can.

Valley Wheel Baseball looking for new players for the 2020 season

REGION – The Valley Wheel Over-30 Baseball League is seeking new players for the upcoming 2020 season, which is set to begin near the end of April. The league is seeking players ages 28 and up. Players turning 28 this year are eligible. However, only players 30 and older can pitch. The league plays 15 regular season games with games being held mostly on Sundays with a couple of weekday games thrown in the mix as well as a special Mother's Day Saturday game in early

May. The league is built on comradery, fair play, and having a good time with friends. If interested in trying out, go to www.valleywheelbaseball.com. The rules of the league and new player forms can be found on the site. For further information, you can contact the league's commissioner, Jim Nason at wheel12@comcast.net or call him at (413) 433-4308. Tryouts will be taking place in the early weeks of April, weather permitting, with a draft following the tryouts.

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Tuesday March 24th
12pm-6pm
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SPORTS

BASKETBALL from page 8

The Braves (19-4) were scheduled to face Central Mass. champion Wayland in a Division 2 state semifinal game at Western New England University on Wednesday night.

The trio of senior forwards Mohammed Sanoogo (18 points), Isaac Percy (16 points), and Eric Montgomery (13 points) combined to score 47 of the Braves points in the Western Mass. finals against Chicopee.

A year ago, Taconic posted 66-51 win over Chicopee in the championship game. They squeaked out a 44-43 victory against top-seeded Northampton in the finals two years ago.

The Pacers, who finished their outstanding season with a 17-5 overall record, were looking to capture the Western Mass. championship trophy for the first time since winning the Division 1 title in 1994.

"We're not very happy at the moment, but we did have a great season," Menard said. "We'll be trying our best to get back here again next year."

The Pacers began the 2019-20 regular season with a loss to Springfield Central in the annual Pioneer Valley Tip-Off at the Cage.

"The atmosphere in this building is always great," Menard said. "It's a very special place to play a basketball game."

In the middle of January, the Pacers squeaked out a 46-44 win against the Braves in the Spaulding HoopHall Classic at Springfield College.

Chicopee seniors Tah-Rhelle Bennefield, Joe Ramos, John Vega, and Kobe Parker, who scored his 1,000th career point at the end of the regular season, played in their final high school basketball game against Taconic on March 7.

"Our four seniors are amazing kids on and off the court," Menard said. "Whenever you lose a special group of players like these four seniors, it hurts. I just love being around them at practice and at games. It's one of the reasons why I enjoy coaching so much."

One of the things that Menard will probably spend a lot of time thinking about



PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHTOS.COM
Jopaul McKrieth shoots with a potential block in the way.

during the offseason was his team's dreadful performance from the free throw line in this year's championship game. The Pacers only made two of their 13 attempts from the line.

"We're definitely a much better free throw shooting team than that," he said. "They also made a few more plays than we did at the end of the game. The ball just didn't bounce our way tonight."

Sophomore guard Jo Paul McKrieth led the Pacers in the Western Mass. finals with 16 points. He scored eight points in each half.

D.J. Saniels, who's also a sophomore guard,

finished the contest with 11 points with the help of three 3-pointers. Bennefield scored 10 points and Parker added seven points. Both are guards and Menard believes they will be able to play basketball at the collegiate level next year.

"I think Kobe can definitely play at either the Division 2 or the Division 3 level in college. He's going to be very successful whichever school that he decides to attend," Menard said. "A few college basketball coaches have shown interest in Tah-Rhelle. I think he'll be a very good Division 3 basketball player. When-



Da'Suan Stewart attempts a long jump shot.

ever one of your players goes on and plays college basketball at any level, it's a fantastic thing."

The Braves took a 14-2 lead with 3:30 left in the first quarter on a base-line jumper by Montgomery.

The Pacers then closed out the opening quarter with an impressive 14-0 run. After a foul-line jumper by Bennefield tied the score at 14-14, he made another jumper from the right side giving his team the lead for the first time.

Chicopee's largest lead of the game was 21-16 following a McKrieth put-back hoop with 5:42 remaining in the first half. The Pacers did miss all seven of their free throw

attempts in the second quarter.

Taconic closed out the half with a 12-6 run taking a slim 28-27 advantage at halftime.

Chicopee only scored seven points in the third quarter, which allowed Taconic the opportunity to build a 47-33 lead.

A lay-up by McKrieth closed the gap to 53-47 in the middle of the fourth quarter.

With 59 seconds remaining in regulation, Parker made a foul-line jumper cutting the Pacers deficit to 57-51.

The Braves outscored the Pacers, 6-1, during the final minute of the contest.

Sign-ups ongoing for Quabbin Over-30 League

REGION — The Quabbin Valley Over-30 Baseball League is seeking new players for 2020 season. The league has six teams, several with open roster spots. Last year, the league voted to allow players age 28 and 29 to be able to join the league, though players under 30 are not eligible to pitch. The cost

of the league this season is \$192. For players new to the league, there will be a workout held in early April prior to the league's annual draft. Players will have an opportunity to showcase their skills before being selected to a team for the season. The season is 15 regular season games plus at least one playoff

game. Games are nine innings and metal (BBCOR -3) or wood bats are allowed. Fields locations are throughout Western Mass. For more information on

the league, or if you are interested in registering, go to <https://www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org/>. The league is also in Facebook.

EVENTS from page 8

just postpone for a couple of weeks and then make it happen," a city official said at Morse's press conference on Tuesday.

The cancellation has brought forth a lot of disbelief and disappointment in the amount of disturbance the coronavirus has caused in the past two weeks.

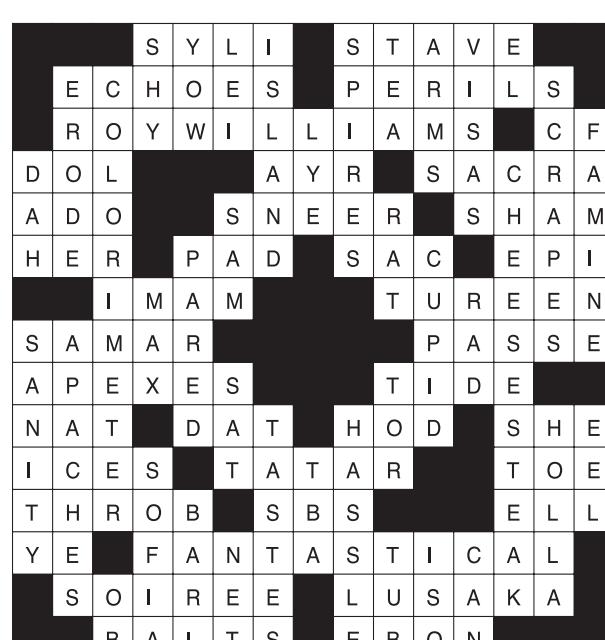
The St. Patrick's Day Road Race was also considered a major preparation step for local runners who then move on to participate in the Patriots Day tradition, the Boston Marathon. However, that race has since also been postponed from its scheduled date of Monday, April 20.

Tentatively, Gov. Charlie Baker and Boston Mayor

Marty Walsh have moved the big race to Monday, Sept. 14. Baker said at a news conference his administration planned to file legislation to hold the race on that date.

The MIAA hockey finals were also scrapped. They were set to take place last weekend at the TD Garden in Boston, which is now completely shut down from having events since Baker lowered the gathering ban to 25 people.

In neighboring Connecticut, the CIAC, the organization that oversees the state's high school sports has cancelled the remainder of the state tournaments for basketball, hockey, and other remaining sports that have competitions.



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Factors to consider before choosing a summer camp

Adults often look back fondly on their childhood experiences at summer camp. Camps can provide the opportunity to form lifelong friendships and discover rewarding hobbies that can enrich campers' lives for decades to come.

Choosing a summer camp is no small task, as the options at families' disposal range from overnight camps to weekday afternoon camps to camps that specialize in certain programs, such as music or dance. Cost also is likely to factor into families' decisions, as the American Camp Association notes that cost can vary greatly depending on which camp families choose. For example, the ACA notes

that the average daily fee at a resident camp is \$85, while the same fee at a day camp is \$43.

When looking for a summer camp for kids, families should make the decision together. Kids should be involved in the selection process, as they're more likely to have an enjoyable camp experience if they had a say in where they will be spending their summers. The following are some factors families should consider as they look for summer camps, courtesy of the ACA.

Kids' interests

The ACA urges parents to consider the

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child's interests and personality before choosing a summer camp. Parents might want their children to attend the same summer camp they visited as youngsters, but each child is different. Just because mom and dad liked a particular camp does not mean their children will. The

ACA notes that summer camps should align with children's interests and maturity level.

Locale

Locale may only be a consideration for families considering overnight camps.

Kids will likely be familiar with the locations of local day camps, but overnight camps might be set in mountain ranges, near the ocean or environments less familiar to youngsters. Kids who love the ocean might benefit from ocean-front camps that focus on marine biology, boating or other activities involving the water. In the same vein, youngsters who like camping and hiking might be more likely to embrace camps located in mountain-



ous regions.

Session length

Camps may last as little as one week or up to a couple of months. Session length should be considered by families looking

at both local day camps and overnight resident camps. Parents who want their children to enjoy a largely schedule-free summer might not want to commit their children to lengthy camp sessions, even if those sessions are close to home. If par-

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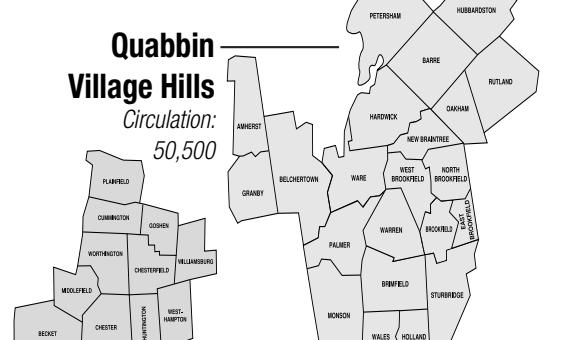
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IN THE CITY

James "Chip" Harrington announces run for 7th Hampden District

By Elise Linscott
Staff Writer

LUDLOW – Ludlow School Committee member James "Chip" Harrington formally announced his candidacy for the 7th Hampden District Rep. seat March 2 at the Ludlow Mills complex, surrounded by family and supporters.

Harrington, a Republican who worked as a legislative aide to current 7th Hampden Rep. Thomas Petrolati (D-Ludlow) from 1996 to 1999, chose that site for the announcement because Ludlow Mills is currently the biggest economic development project in town – and economic development in the region is the No. 1 issue Harrington said he'd bring to the State House, with a focus on bringing funding and jobs to the area. Petrolati, who's held the seat since 1986, announced last month he won't be running for reelection in 2020.

"I'm going to work just as hard as I have over the past 30 years at the local level bringing funds back to this district," Harrington said.

The district consists of Precinct 6B in Chicopee; Ludlow; Ward 8, precincts E, F and G in Springfield; and Belchertown precincts B, C and D.

He's also spoken to Gov. Charlie Baker and Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito, who've pledged to endorse Harrington's campaign, he said.

In 2016, Harrington ran unsuccessfully for a seat in the state Senate's 1st Hampden and Hampshire District race. But during that time, he got to know both Baker and Polito and has maintained those relationships, he said.



STAFF PHOTO BY ELISE LINSCKETT

Ludlow School Committee member James "Chip" Harrington formally announced his candidacy for the 7th Hampden District Rep. seat March 2 at the Ludlow Mills complex.

"(Baker's) principles are very much in line with mine," said Harrington, who considers himself a fiscal conservative.

Those relationships could also help bring funding to projects in Western Massachusetts, Harrington said.

"I will have the ability to reach out to the Governor directly and make the important case that funds here are needed and necessary, and Western Mass. and the Pioneer Valley deserves a fair shake just like any other region in the state," Har-

rington said.

Harrington has served on the Ludlow School Committee since 2005 and was a selectman from 1994 to 1997. Currently, Harrington is a part-time police officer in Ludlow and works as a program manager and volunteer coordinator for the Department of Correction, where he writes curriculum and helps individuals struggling with addiction.

He's also a former small business owner; he opened variety store Our Town

Variety on Fuller Street 17 years ago and sold the business three years ago.

"I have a different perspective on this district because I've been so involved over the years," Harrington said.

Harrington and his wife, Noel, both graduated from Ludlow High School and decided to stay in town to raise their two kids, a son and a daughter, he said.

He also pointed to the work he's done as a School Committee member, including on the new Harris Brook Elementary School project, which received a grant for 58 percent of the cost from the state. He's also advocated for families against raising school-related fees like busing, he said.

"I've always been a very conservative voice on the School Committee to keep fiscal things in order, because I recognize that families do struggle," he said.

He said he doesn't see this as simply a Republican or Democratic race or on any particular issues, and that he plans to run his campaign on issues that affect everyday working people.

"They need somebody who's just like them," Harrington said. "And I look forward to working very hard" between now and Nov. 3, he added.

If elected, he said he also believes in reaching across the aisle and working with all parties.

Fellow School Committee member, Jake Oliveira, has also announced a campaign for the 7th Hampden District seat.

Over the next nine months, Harrington said his priority will be knocking on doors, letting people know where he stands on issues and moving "full-steam ahead" with the campaign.

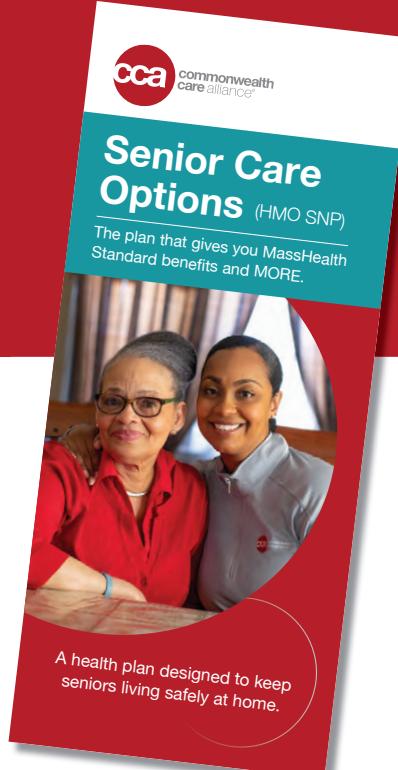
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